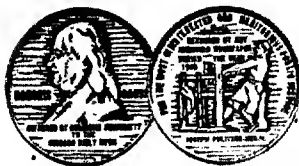


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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1961

Dulles Stepping Out with Honor

IF PRESIDENT KENNEDY harbored any pique over Allen Dulles' role—whatever that was—in the Cuban disaster of last spring, it failed to show as he announced Dulles' retirement from the Central Intelligence Agency. Instead, he expressed "very strong feelings of appreciation and regard" for the man who has directed the CIA for eight years.

The exact role of the CIA in the Cuban failure may never be disclosed, any more than its successes in other ventures are open to public scrutiny. When criticism came his way, Dulles offered to resign and become the scapegoat, but to his credit Mr. Kennedy refused to allow it and assumed all the blame himself.

In spite of all that has been written about Allen Dulles and his agency, the general public can have no real basis for judging the performance of either. The CIA itself is an anomaly in our generally open society—a distasteful necessity of the cold war.

The director is named with public fanfare. His salary (\$21,000) is specified, but everything he does to earn it is super-secret. He becomes a target for criticism with no means of defense. Even Congress,

as a whole, does not know how many employees he has, exactly what they do, or how much money the agency spends.

So far as the public record is concerned, Allen Dulles has performed brilliantly in a variety of government assignments under every President since Woodrow Wilson. Mr. Kennedy's laudatory remarks insure that he will close his remarkable career in November with honor.

His successor will be John A. McCone, who was chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission under President Eisenhower. By reaching into Republican ranks for McCone, President Kennedy not only found a man who has some familiarity with government secrets and the need for them, but probably pulled the teeth of any political opposition to a sensitive appointment. It looks like a good choice.